

# LOUISIANA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 8, 2008

Department of Agriculture and Forestry Update

### **LDAF fulfills emergency fuel mission**

BATON ROUGE - Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain, D.V.M., said power was restored to the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry headquarters late Sunday night.

LDAF headquarters had been without power and computers for a full week.

"Even with this tremendous obstacle the LDAF has successfully fulfilled our emergency mission," Strain said. "We've helped evacuate livestock and pets from coastal areas, pumped more than a millions gallons of fuel to emergency responders and agricultural producers and shipped commodities to the Red Cross."

Strain said emergency generators helped the LDAF disburse more than a million gallons of fuel to emergency responders across the state.

"Every ambulance, every bus and every truck you've seen on the road with emergency supplies has been fueled and re-fueled many times by the LDAF," Strain said. "We've had as many as 200 ambulances lined up at our fueling station in Baton Rouge. This is a scene that was repeated across the state at our fueling depots at Woodworth and Hammond."

Strain said buses carrying evacuees refueled at LDAF pumping sites in Alexandria, Gonzales, Grand Prairie and Allen.

More than 500 hundred fueling missions were requested and fulfilled by the LDAF staff headquartered at the Governor's Office of Homeland Protection and Emergency Preparedness, Strain said.

The LDAF also delivered 40 temporary tanks and 34 pumps to critical locations across the state.

"We shipped and pumped 498,000 gallons of gas, 580,078 gallons of diesel and 179,000 pounds of aviation gas," Strain said. "The hard work of the LDAF emergency fuel personnel during this crisis has been phenomenal."

Not all of the fuel went to emergency responders, Strain said.

"We've made sure our dairies and poultry farms have had the fuel necessary to keep these important food sources operational," Strain said. "We've also made sure our farmers and producers got the fuel they needed to weather this storm."

Strain said Gustav opened a hole in the roof of the LDAF Florida Boulevard headquarters and did major damage to three office suites.

"The LDAF Forestry Office was ruined but that didn't stop our forestry officials from getting out into the field to assess damages and report to the United States Forest Service," Strain said. "We've done flyovers and shot hundreds of photographs. They also helped with our fueling operations."

Strain is meeting Monday with agricultural producers in Oak Grove at the Thomas Lingo Assembly Center and Goldman Equipment in Mer Rouge.

On Tuesday Strain will speak with agricultural producers in Ferriday at the Highway 15 Community Center and Goldman Equipment in Lake Providence at 2:30 pm.

Strain is planning on visiting Evangeline and Pointe Coupee parishes on Wednesday but that trip may be delayed by concerns over Hurricane Ike.

Strain said the LDAF Web site is operational and critical information may be accessed at [www.ldaf.state.la.us](http://www.ldaf.state.la.us).

For the latest information on Hurricane Gustav, you can visit [emergency.louisiana.gov](http://emergency.louisiana.gov) or call the state's emergency hotline at 1-866-288-2484 to listen to a recorded message with the most up-to-date information.